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SMOKE

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O Perishing Republic

Eight murders, twenty-three
suicides and a
rape
complete the morning news
for this man about to become a
father.
The ground
lying fallow outside is
not mentioned in these columns.
Locked in the single heart, the
record will be kept
forever with the nurse's
words
—The woman died
in labor but the doctor
says the child will live.

A Valediction

Believe that as the water breaks
At the prow and you never know
(Your heart secure on glassed-in decks)

In that same moment it will unite—
And if you turned to look below
The unbroken sea would tire your sight.

T. C. Wilson

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The Pleasures of Merely Circulating

I.

The garden flew round with the angel,
The angel flew round with the clouds,
And the clouds flew round and the clouds flew round
And the clouds flew round with the clouds.

II.

Is there any secret in skulls,
The cattle skulls in the woods?
Do the drummers in black hoods
Rumble anything out of their drums?

III.

Mrs. Anderson's Swedish baby
Might well have been German or Spanish,
Yet that things go round and again go round
Has rather a classical sound.

WALLACE STEVENS

Lines

When rapture builds itself an airy nest
    In the hot month of May,
And earth turns only to transient rest,
    Oh, let me lose my way

In you who have been absent from my side,
    So that we share again
(When earth sleeps lightly and while May goes by,)
The perfect joy that is the child of pain.

Parting

Now that the shadow of division lies between us
And a thread of our lives we tie so tenuously
is being undone,
Now that the death which secret lovers suffer
is upon us,
Now that the easing of the night is finished
and you are almost gone,
In the hard second before we move apart
this combined breath is ours,
Then go, and let it be,
But when you are distant spare me a moment of your living
        and think of me.

SUSANNA VALENTINE MITCHELL

In the Morning He Was Dead

Thereafter we heard the night's thousand
hinges creak to this pearl light wherein
he lies alone—one boy done out of laughter,
depleted now of detriment wholly—lies as one
moist leaf on red clay. And no other leaves dawdling
down in frosty falling—no other leaf.

In the southwest tender wind let us at last
slide our palms dully together, let a geese-
troupe honk, as if tupil-weather had furrowed
his forehead with utmost wonder how the helmsman
of the woolly heavens found rest at the steep sun's
beacon in west wind thunder.

Not see the green leaf on a red bank—one fleck
in the iridescent gleam of the day's pearling, not know
that in earlier blackness the gaunt angel burrowed,
took and retreated—never understand the silence had
no voice to decry, and the stars eschewed earth
only because the west wind trumpeted rain
when cicadas dulled and failed.

And if we had come to this a hundred different ways—
along grey paths, incredulous along
the unmapped labyrinths of all our fears,
tiptoeing on our hopes, flagging the little faiths—
at last we would have found a bitten plum, one
fallen wren, one mouth clamped shut against the cackle
of the years. Perhaps above we'd hear the wind stir
vastly from the sea where gulls named, repeat, name
this which cannot grope itself toward any name,
not even sound.

This then is such a small lull in the diapason
tumult of earth, one swift pause of the voice

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and life's terrible sentences roll unto
the utter word once more—above terror, further above
the crocus blossoming of love? And no one heard—
we heard, who were sucked dry of early faith and late;
of voice—and stood deaf in the din of our veins,
as if the bitter sentence had never resumed
its deep processional again.

Onto the cold petalling of day let not this come
wildly, as if naked gale, buffeted, as if
shorn and flayed. That we who marked the wary
cowering of wisdom forget now to disdain, forgive our
stooping to the sage and calm; only remember how he
was swift and limpid when the tenderest suns steeped him
in wildness, only recall his lithe debility has blotted
out our greyish cogitations into fell and piquant anguish
on this hazy-slender dawn.

We have found him, laid aside by the night,
scorned by this which we title day—one leaf,
we said. One leaf—we fondled our thinking athwart—
when no other leaves fall. And so the strength of earth
and seasons lies undone, unravelled and despoiled,
and we who tottered gravely unto this lift
from the clay one leaf and hear birds whistle forth
the desperate calm which no world can answer and
no altitudes can halt.

David C. DeJong

Mill Town

The sun sinks into the sky
and when the black leaves
move slowly
groping for stars
miners sigh.

When horses neigh
and the earth shudders
miners pray.

And when the cry of a dog
melts into the valley
miners die.

Iowa

The night wind sees
starving
under trees
farmers
in agony
earth
begging of sky
and moaning in poverty.

LEWIS JACOBS

Incurable Sanctus

Incurable Sanctus, thrice struck
on the brazen material: of happiness, of love, and of power,
sounded to echo between them, disparate.
Incurable sanctus, of a priestly hunger
touched by a wafer,
of a God touched by a bended knee:
electric and calcium are aerial powers
blended with this world,
a servitor colored in robes like a parchesi disk
moves to thy rules, his flesh bruised with the beating
on the breast of a ringed fist.
Incurable sanctus, *beatus est*
qui venit in nomine Domini to behold
staled eyes of crowded worshippers,
their evanescent thought.

FRANK MERCHANT

From General to Particular

This is a long way that we
Have come to face finality.

Since man pushed the slime aside
And stood up slowly, feeble-eyed,
All men have died; we have not died.

We went concealed against the sun,
Renewed and guarded and passed on
Eon by eon.

The first dawn
Flows in us; even the still, wan
Chaos which light splashed upon:

But this is memory only and
The half-remembered stretched Hand.

Now out of the long secret zone
Of blood and bone
We have escaped, have seen and known
Grass and dirt and tree and stone;

And looked on flesh and loved and lain
Deliriously in flesh again.

From that warm dark you and I
Stand beneath the cold sky
Knowing at last that we shall die.

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After the ageless content,
This beautiful, bitter, brief moment;

From anonymous night, the brow
Lifted to all the lights now;

The sleepers waked for martyrdom.
What once we were we shall become.

Winfield Townley Scott

Ferreter

Memory can liquefy at night (writ in water):
I piano-play fingers down the body
of who's lain by in bed,
impossible to think who came,
undressed, now feels my hand.
Mass-production perfume foils
(alike odors, everyone uses) identification.
Brow corduroys; pores expel;
measuring-worm muscles, racked by memory's rack,
loop tensile up leg-bone;
the conscious mind solves no solution.
Dawn (and eyes see who) will hardly come;
nor excuse to, pathless, rise,
cross down the room, flip a light on.
Memory, obsolete—the mind assumes detective:
I roll, search out the blacked-out head,
to learn if lip or tongue may learn.

R. Wade Vliet

Flavor of Earth

Could we unhand this little while
the earth we handle overmuch
and turn and till and plow and pile
but leave no monumental touch;
could we unhand it and forget
this cousin-of-the-clod endeavor
these acres flavored with our sweat
this never-getting-done forever—
and, rather, let the stuff of clay
color of sky and weight of stone
employ ourselves in such a way
that, going, part of them is gone:
then we might leave some signature
stamped on the stubborn earth secure,
since those who die to haunt us most
are those who take, not leave, a ghost.

All that recalls a last year's neighbor—
a hat and coat and two broomsticks,
a scarecrow on a crucifix:
no idiom has marked his labor.
It's more of attitude than toil
that makes the character of soil,
and in the end the plowman's hand
will prove more plastic than the land;
unless he can devise, disguise
beneath these antics of a fool
the wisdom of the very-wise
who let the flat earth be a tool
to seed and harrow, reap and rend
six feet of earth stood up on end.

HOWARD NUTT

City

Thou
quickener of the heart
listen

tight-ribbed buildings
urge
leaning
thou to sing
eyes to weeping.

Head deep in sound
siren and wheel
jumbling of tongues
and fired voices.

Welcome din and traffic
piston dynamo
metallic shuddering.

Move to song
sweet lily foam and bloom
river bank green-cushioned.

The brain shall rear
temple and sepulchre
over roaring asphalt.

Shining white citadel of peace

SHOUT!

WILLARD MAAS

An Early Martyr

Rather than permit him
to testify in court
Giving reasons
why he stole from
Exclusive stores
then sent post-cards
To the police
to come and arrest him
—if they could—
They railroaded him
to an asylum for
The criminally insane
without trial

The prophylactic to
madness
Having been denied him
he went close to
The edge out of
frustration and
Doggedness—

Inflexible, finally they
had to release him—
The institution was
"overcrowded"
They let him go
in the custody of
A relative on condition
that he remain
Out of the state—

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They "cured him" all
right
But the set-up
he fought against
Remains—
and his youthful deed
Signalizing
the romantic period
Of a revolt
he served well
Is still good—

Let him be
a factory whistle
That keeps blaring—
Sense, sense, sense!
so long as there's
A mind to remember
and a voice to
carry it on—
Never give up
keep at it!
Unavoided, terrifying
to such bought
Courts as he thought
to trust to but they
Double-crossed him.

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

DAVID C. DEJONG — *In the Morning He Was Dead*

has recently had a novel, *Belly Fulla Straw*, published by Alfred A. Knopf. He is living in Providence, R. I.

LEWIS JACOBS — *Mill Town Iowa*

is chiefly noted as the editor of *Experimental Cinema*. He has also made several films. He lives in Brooklyn, N. Y.

WILLARD MAAS — *City*

of Staten Island, N. Y., has a rapidly growing reputation among the younger poets.

FRANK MERCHANT — *Incurable Sanctus*

an inhabitant of Providence, R. I., was once an alcolyte.

SUSANNA VALENTINE MITCHELL — *Lines Parting*

was born in Philadelphia, now lives in East Greenwich, R. I., and has contributed to *Harper's*, *The Forge*, and the *New Yorker*.

HOWARD NUTT — *Flavor of Earth*

has had work in advance-guard magazines. He is one of a group of writers centered in Peoria, Illinois.

WINFIELD TOWNLEY SCOTT — *From General to Particular*

has contributed to *Poetry* and *Hound & Horn*. He is assistant editor of the *Providence Journal* book page.

WALLACE STEVENS — *The Pleasures of Merely Circulating*

of Hartford, Conn., rests his reputation solidly on two editions of his single volume, *Harmonium*.

R. WADE VLIET — *Ferreter*

has had acceptances from several magazines, including *Poetry*. He is in Oklahoma City, Okla., working on novels.

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS — *An Early Martyr*

a practicing physician of Rutherford, N. J., is the Dean of Left Wing writers. The most recent of his eleven-odd published volumes is *Collected Poems*, 1921-1931.

T. C. WILSON — *O Perishing Republic*
A Valediction

has frequently been published in both English and American magazines. He lives in Anne Harbor, Michigan.